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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1563
INFO RUCNDSC/DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBN/AMCONSUL MELBOURNE PRIORITY 6385
RUEHPT/AMCONSUL PERTH PRIORITY 4649
RUEHDN/AMCONSUL SYDNEY PRIORITY 4610
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 2016
RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA PRIORITY 0386
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0809

UNCLAS CANBERRA 000513

SIPDIS

STATE FOR ISN AND EAP

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: KNNP PARM PREL AS

SUBJECT: AUSTRALIA WELCOMES FISSILE MATERIAL CUT-OFF TREATY
NEGOTIATIONS

¶1. Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs Stephen Smith issued a strong public statement of support for the recent agreement to begin negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) on June 1. Smith cited the growing international consensus on the need to act against the spread of nuclear weapons, which he attributed to renewed engagement of the new Obama Administration as well as the efforts by the Australian-initiated International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament. He stated that concluding a FMCT agreement has long been an Australian foreign policy objective due to its benefits for both nuclear disarmament as well as nonproliferation.

¶2. FM Smith referenced the recent nuclear weapon test by North Korea as adding urgency to the need for negotiating the FMCT and for entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). He foreshadowed that Australia would play an active role in working with all member states in the Conference to lay the groundwork for the FMCT negotiations, noting that Australia's Ambassador to the United Nations, Caroline Millar, will assume the Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament later in June.

CLUNE